were some requests made by the Collectors of Wayanad, Belgaum, Khammam Districts of Kerala, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh respectively regarding the utilization of funds and they were apprised that utilization of the funds was to be regulated in the manner prescribed in the guidelines issued by the PMO.

GDP *vis-a-vis* Research in agriculture sector

†1974. SHRI LALIT KISHORE CHATURVEDI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether GDP growth rate of agriculture is estimated to be 2.7 per cent during 2006-07 in comparison to 6.0 per cent in 2005-06; the reasons for such decline;

(b) whether the agriculture sector is facing constant decline as farmers are not able to recover even their costs and are committing suicides;

(c) whether no research-oriented trends were encouraged in the agriculture sector during the last twenty years; and

(d) whether Government would consider to establish Central Councils in each State to conduct research on the agricultural products of that State on the lines of Indian Council of Agricultural Research?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) and (b) According to the latest advance estimates released by Central Statistical Organization (CSO), the annual growth rate of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) from the agricultural and allied sectors of forestry, logging and fishing in real terms (at 1999-2000 prices) stands at 2.7 percent during 2006-07 *vis-a-vis* 6.0 percent during 2005-06. The growth rate of 2.7 percent for the year 2006-07 is on the higher base level growth of 6.0 percent for the year 2005-06. The growth performance in the agricultural sector shows wide variations from time to time, with maximum growth of 10.0 percent in the year 2003-04 and minimum growth of (—) 7.2 percent in the year 2002-03 during the period 2002-03 to 2006-07. The Government of India has recently approved a rehabilitation package for 31 suicide prone districts in the four states of Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Karnataka and Kerala for distressed farmers.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

The package aims at providing a sustainable support to farmers through debt relief to farmers, improved supply of institutional credit, assured irrigation facilities, subsidiary income opportunties, etc.

(c) and (d) The Tenth Plan Working Group of the Department of Agricultural Research and Education recommended an amount of Rs. 25,000 crore, approximately 1% of GDP of agriculture and allied sectors. The research efforts encouraged during the last 20 years in the agriculture sector are as follows:

- Harnessing modern technology to develop quality seeds of high yielding varieties and planting material and breeder seeds to realize optimum production potential of other inputs.
- Crop improvement in oilseeds, millets, rice, wheat, mesta, sunnhemp, cotton vegetables and fruits.
- Agricultural engineering involving development of the number of farmer friendly equipments/implements including pos-harvest engineering technology.
- Agricultural extension and education through Krishi Vigyan Kendras in various districts and State Agricultural Universities and Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) Institutes.
- Development of Integrated Pest Management Approaches for sustainable agriculture.

The ICAR undertakes its activities with the network of its Krishi Vigyan Kendras in various districts and under its specialized research stations. State Agricultural Universities also undertake research in their areas. There is no proposal by the Government to establish Central Councils in each State.

Crisis in farm sector

1975. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL. Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the farm sector has been experiencing severe crisis in the country for the past few years;